

FACULTY OF MUSIC UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

FACULTY RECITAL SERIES

Colin Tilney
clavichord



Friday, October 16, 1992
8 pm
Walter Hall - Edward Johnson Building

PROGRAMME

Sonata in A minor, Wq 57/2

Allegro

Andante

Allegro di molto

C.P.E. Bach

1714 - 1788

Fantasia in D minor, K. 397

W.A. Mozart

1756 - 1791

Prelude and Fugue in C minor, BWV 847
(*Well Tempered Clavier, Book One*)

J.S. Bach

1685 - 1750

Two Minuets

(*from Suite in E flat, BWV 819*)

Prelude and Fugue in G, BWV 884

(*Well Tempered Clavier, Book Two*)

Fugue in C, Falck 31/1

W.F. Bach

Polonaise in C minor, Falck 12/2

1710 - 1784

Fugue in D minor, Falck 31/4

Sonata in D, Wq 61/2

C.P.E. Bach

Allegro di molto

1714 - 1788

Allegretto

Presto di molto

Clavichord by Arnold Dolmetsch, London, 1895

PROGRAMME NOTES

The clavichord is at once extraordinarily old and amazingly modern. Its simple mechanism, derived from the monochord, consists of a set of levers with small metal tangents attached. Since the tangents strike one end of the string's sounding length (a node), very little energy is developed and, consequently, the clavichord's dynamic range, though wide, is soft. Within these quiet limits, however, the instrument produces sounds of exquisite colour and variety that recall the human voice and, like the voice, are capable of a subtle vibrato. It probably speaks to us most affectingly from around 1740 - 1780, in the hands of Bach and his sons.

Both Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach sonatas, *Sonata in A minor, Wq 57/2* and *Sonata in D, Wq 61/2*, come from the six collections of keyboard pieces "For Connoisseurs and Amateurs" that the composer published as a subscription series between 1779 and 1787, in the last ten years of his life. The "connoisseurs and amateurs" of the title were, respectively, educated, rational listeners and the uneducated, emotional general public, i.e. informed professionals and ordinary, "instinctive" music-lovers. To reach this extended market, C.P.E. Bach supplemented the clavichord sonatas and free fantasies with a number of more popular rondos, specifically designed for the fortepiano. This is wonderful music, tender, witty and profound - and as yet undiscovered by the world's pianists.

The *Fantasia in D minor, K. 397* was first published in 1804, thirteen years after Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's death, but probably dates from the decade 1780 to 1790. It is entitled "Fantaisie d'Introduction pour le Pianoforte", so perhaps Mozart intended to follow it with a larger work, as in the case of the *C minor Fantasia, K. 475*. Performance on the clavichord may strike some listeners as unorthodox, even misguided, but Mozart is known to have enjoyed playing and composing on the clavichord - visitors to Salzburg can still see his instrument today - and the passionate arioso of the *Fantasia* becomes even more poignant with the use of vibrato.

Johann Sebastian Bach's didactic aims in writing the *Well Tempered Clavier* - begun in 1720 as eleven short preludes for W.F. Bach and finished (Book Two) probably some time in the early 1740s - seem to have been twofold: to provide pieces in all twenty-four major and minor keys, implying a temperament more flexible than the customary meantone; and to promote a new system of fingering in which hitherto unneeded scales could be played by passing the thumb under

the other fingers. The *Prelude in C minor* combines chordal figuration, recitative and coda in a dark key, while the *G major* pair is light in both mood and tonality.

Like the *Chromatic Fantasy*, the *ricercars* from the *Musical Offering* and some of the *Art of Fugue* contrapuncti, the *Two Minuets* from the *Suite in E flat, BWV 819* show J.S. Bach's interest in the expressive "empfindsam" style of the following generation. The second, in particular, recalls the intensity of W.F. Bach's polonaises in minor keys.

Wilhelm Friedemann Bach's eight three-part *Fugues*, dedicated in 1778 to his patron, Princess Amalia, the sister of Frederick the Great, blend contrapuntal ingenuity with sensual harmonies, a "cantable Art" that is even more striking in the twelve masterly *Polonaises* of about 1760. Like C.P.E. Bach's sonatas and fantasies, these dances would also dramatically enhance the piano repertoire.

TONIGHT'S ARTIST

Colin Tilley is an internationally known interpreter of music for harpsichord, clavichord and fortepiano, with many acclaimed solo records on EMI, Decca, Hyperion, Dorian and Deutsche Grammophon. He lives in Toronto, where he teaches at the University and at the Conservatory, as well as plays old and new music with his own group, *Les Coucous Bénévoles*. In 1993 he will be playing concerts in Hong Kong, Tokyo and several Australian cities, including Melbourne, where he will be guest artist at the International Festival. His study-edition of the French unmeasured preludes has recently been published by Schott's in London.



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